

"La jewcy vita" between love, religion and politics
- The competitions of the 30th JFBB

Press Release
Potsdam/Berlin, 29 May 2024

This year, the Jewish Film Festival Berlin Brandenburg is showing 71 Jewcy Movies from 15 production countries, including Canada, Australia and Spain. Jewcy Movies will be screened in Berlin and Potsdam for the 30th time, and the anniversary edition of the festival promises a variety of genres, from thrillers to political dramas and comedies to touching, up-close documentaries.

The two competitions for the best feature film and documentary take centre stage.

In memory of the cinema legend Gershon Klein, who died in 1999 at the age of 79, his daughters Madeleine Budde and Jacqueline Hopp are once again donating the prizes in the two competitions this year, each worth 3,000 euros.

The prize for intercultural dialogue and the prize for the promotion of young filmmakers will also be awarded. Both prizes are endowed with 2,000 euros and are donated by Potsdam entrepreneur Stephan Goericke.

This year's **feature film jury** of the Jewish Film Festival Berlin Brandenburg includes Marcia Jarmel, filmmaker and organiser of the San Francisco Jewish Film Festival, actor Garry Fischmann, known from SOKO Hamburg and the Netflix series KLEO, among others, and the long-time director of Filmfest Hamburg and film scholar Albert Wiederspiel.

The following twelve productions are represented in this year's feature film competition:

Including the tragicomedy A GOOD JEWISH BOY (Noé Debré, FR 2024), in which Bellisha and his mother actually lead an unexcited life in a Parisian suburb. But when the nearby synagogue closes, as does the last kosher grocery shop, the two realise that they are the last Jews living here.

BETWEEN THE TEMPLES by Nathan Silver (USA 2024), another light-hearted comedy about crises of meaning and faith, focuses on cantor Ben and his former music teacher Carla. It's not just the age difference that makes this relationship so special.

Daniel Auerbach fights, among other things, against "hyper-Judaism" in the film of the same name by David Volach (IL 2023). The film portrays the psychogram of a failed man who becomes entangled in endless monologues coupled with (self-)doubt. The film could be the director's own making of.

In HOME (Benny Fredman, IL 2023), not only the expectations of the in-laws, but also corruption and violence come up against the protagonist Yair, who actually just wants to realise his dream of owning his own computer business.

The Canadian film LESS THAN KOSHER (Daniel am Rosenberg, 2023) is like a musical. At first, the tattooed and rebellious Viv is reluctant to step in as cantor, but then she discovers not only the rabbi's son, but also completely new sounds.

THE BLOND BOY FROM THE CASBAH (Alexandre Arcady, FR 2023) tells the story of young Antoine, who discovers his passion for cinema as the Algerian conflict comes to a head. Berlin actor Christian Berkel takes on one of the leading roles in the Jewish, Muslim and Christian household.

RUNNING ON SAND (Adar Shafran, IL 2023) is a football film to coincide with the European Championships: Aumari, a refugee from Eritrea, takes advantage of a mix-up at the airport to escape deportation from Israel. He quickly assumes the identity of a football star, but Aumari has no footballing talent whatsoever. A story about pain, loss and hope.

Henrika Kull's film SÜDSEE (DE 2023) is about a German-Israeli friendship that is more topical than ever: A friendly time-out without relationship ambitions becomes an exploration of complicated terrain - personal, political and historical. While the closeness between the two protagonists grows, the missile defence system above them keeps the war at a distance.

THE FUTURE (Noam Kaplan, IL 2023) is about an algorithm that makes it possible to predict terrorist attacks. But the young Palestinian woman Yaffa has found a way to circumvent it, a political thriller of a special kind.

Pierre Goldman, an activist in the May 1968 riots in Paris, is sentenced to life imprisonment. Despite the instructions of his defence, he pursues his own strategy in the appeal proceedings and accuses the prosecution of anti-Semitism. An oppressive yet captivating drama about the trials of the 1970s in the film THE GOLDMAN CASE (Cédric Kahn, FR 2023).

In THE VANISHING SOLDIER (IL 2023), Dani Rosenberg tells the captivating and poetic story of an 18-year-old Israeli soldier who decides to return to his girlfriend in Tel Aviv. Once there, however, he soon learns that everyone believes he has been kidnapped during the war, which makes his escape even more intense. Who else can protect him?

Questions are also asked in a father-daughter journey to Poland: TREASURE (DE/FR 2024) by Juliane Heinz takes us to the place where almost the entire family was murdered in the Shoah, among other places. The daughter has many questions, the father evades them, an emotional balancing act between family fate and trauma.

The **documentary film jury** of the Jewish Film Festival Berlin Brandenburg is made up of Berlin director and producer Britta Wauer, Romanian director and scientific director of the Jewish Film Festival Bucharest Felicia Waldman and musician and author Yuriy Gurzhi, known to many as the initiator of the Russendisko party series with Vladimir Kaminer.

The following nine productions are represented in this year's documentary film competition:

How do you help people in extreme situations between life and death? This is the subject of the film A STILL SMALL VOICE by Luke Lorentzen (US 2023). A young hospital chaplain finds her way between the desire to help, doubts about her Jewish faith and her own traumas.

Almost a million people from the former Soviet Union immigrated to Israel in the 1990s. A shocking experience, especially as a child. Growing up between Russian-speaking parents and a society that was alienated from the newcomers, the children of that time shed light on an important part of Israeli immigration history in GENERATION 1.5 (Roman Shumanov, IL 2023).

The crumbling relationship between his parents is something that director Ohad Milstein cannot let go of. In MONOGAMIA (IL 2023), he explores the question of how love can be rekindled in a marriage after decades. He asks uncomfortable questions, digs out old footage from the family archive and also begins to look at his own marriage. Director Ohad Milstein was a 2023 JFBB award winner and won the Gershon Klein Documentary Film Award with KNOCK ON THE DOOR.

Tamar Manasseh has a mission in the film *RABBI ON THE BLOCK* (Brad Rothschild, USA 2023): For her, being Jewish means getting involved, breaking down prejudice, caring for the disadvantaged - which is a Herculean task when you're active in a socially deprived neighbourhood in Chicago. As a woman, a Jew and an African-American, she experiences discrimination first-hand on a daily basis.

The documentary *REFLECTIONS IN SYNAGOGUE* (Amir Moverman, US 2024) is set in Manhattan. A photo archive of all of Manhattan's synagogues becomes the occasion for a reflection on Jewish life and community today, its worries and fears, and a future worth striving for.

In a montage of encounters and historical footage, Danny Ben-Moshe reconstructs a biography in *REVENGE: OUR DAD THE NAZI KILLER* (AU 2023) that, among other things, raises the question of historical justice: did father go hunting for hidden Nazis with other Jews?

The radical split into two personalities was Yehiel De-Nur's strategy for dealing with his trauma as a Shoah survivor. When he wrote his international bestsellers as Ka.tzetnik, isolated and in prisoner's clothing, he was back on the "other planet" that the fictional character with the concentration camp in his name had never left. Ka.tzetnik's books have moved Israel. The documentary biography *THE RETURN FROM THE OTHER PLANET* by Assaf Lapid (IL/DE 2023) translates this split personality into images. It not only poses the question of how to overcome trauma, but also the value of subjective truth.

In *TELLING NONIE* (IL 2024), Paz Schwartz uses archive images to explore the tensions between Gaza and Israel in the first half of the 1950s. It is about the then head of the Egyptian secret service in Gaza and his daughter Nonie. More than 60 years after the assassination attempt on her father, Nonie receives mysterious information. What does the former Mossad agent have to do with the assassination?

The images of the Russian-American photographer Roman Vishniac still characterise the image of Eastern European Jewry on the eve of the Shoah. The film biography *VISHNIAC* (Laura Bialis, US 2023) follows his path from the October Revolution to the Weimar Republic and a new start in the USA. In a mixture of interviews with relatives, contemporary witnesses and historians, archive material, autobiographical notes and re-enacted scenes, his daughter guides us chronologically through the life of a man who not only captured Einstein and Chagall in photographs, but was also a biologist and pioneer of photomicrography.

The director will be present for almost all competition entries.

Accreditation for the JFBB is possible here and is free of charge for the reporting press.

The festival centre of the 30th JFBB is once again the Filmkunst 66. The programme will also be shown at Movimiento, Bundesplatz-Kino and Kino Krokodil as well as open air at Kino Central. In Potsdam, the JFBB will be shown at the Thalia Programm kino, the Filmmuseum Potsdam and open air at the Inselkino.

All press releases can be found on the JFBB press portal. There you will also find the INTERNAL PRESS AREA with all film stills. If you have any questions, please contact the press officer Jana Gebauer at j.gebauer@jfb.info.